

# Rural Mental Health



As farmers and ranchers, we have many assets that need cared for on a regular basis, including our mental health. With daily stressors from natural disasters and volatile markets to labor shortages and equipment breakdowns, it's no surprise that an increasing number farmers and farm families are experiencing stress and mental health concerns. It is important to recognize signs of poor mental health and know how to seek help when needed.

## SYMPTOMS OF POOR MENTAL HEALTH

- **Persistent worry and fear**
- **Avoidance of others**
- **Lack of interest or pleasure in activities**
- **Significant weight change or changes in appetite**
- **Problems sleeping and low energy**
- **Slow or fidgety body movements**
- **Difficulty concentrating**
- **Frequent thoughts of death or suicide**
- **Substance abuse**
- **Unexplained changes in physical appearance**

*"A healthy farm or ranch is nothing without a healthy you!"*

-American Farm Bureau Federation



# Stress Management Techniques

**USE RELIABLE RESOURCES** - Find resources to aid you and others affected by stress.

**CONNECT WITH OTHERS** - Talk to friends, family or colleagues who may be experiencing similar feelings.

**KEEP YOURSELF PHYSICALLY HEALTHY** - Avoid excessive amounts of caffeine, alcohol, tobacco or use of illegal drugs or abuse of prescription medication. Consider talking with your family doctor or mental health professional if you are experiencing chronic stress.

**SEEK ROUTINE** - Maintain a normal family and daily routine, limiting demanding responsibilities on yourself and your family when possible.

**FIND PRACTICAL WAYS TO RELAX** - Seek time away from your farm or ranch obligations through a hobby or social activity. Allow time to recharge after exceptionally busy days and seasons.

## Seeking Help

### For You

FARMAID:

**1-800-FARMAID** (1-800-327-6243)

Hotlines hours are Monday-Friday 7am-8pm MST

**National Suicide Prevention Hotline:**

**1-800-273-8255** - 24/7 confidential support

Find a counseling center near you:

Search '**Idaho Mental Health Services Guide**' for a list of service providers across Idaho

Visit the Farm Crisis Center at [farmcrisis.nfu.org](http://farmcrisis.nfu.org)

### For Others

**Rural Resilience Training:**

Training materials focused on mental health and stress management from Farm Credit, American Farm Bureau, and National Farmers Union

Online course - [farmcredit.com/ruralresilience](http://farmcredit.com/ruralresilience)

**Farm State of Mind** webpage from American Farm Bureau: follow **#FarmStateofMind** on social media

**5 steps to helping someone in emotional pain:**

1. Ask - Start the Conversation
2. Be There
3. Stay Connected
4. Keep Them Safe
5. Help Them Connect to a Mental Health Professional

The Idaho Farm and Ranch Center was created in 2020, to help Idahoans start, manage, and transition farms and ranches.

Visit [farm.idaho.gov](http://farm.idaho.gov) for more resources.

